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EAT YOUR
WAY TO A
HEALTHY
HEART



The background of the page features a woman in athletic wear running, positioned on the left side. Behind her and the text is a large, semi-transparent image of a digital scale. The scale's display shows '110' and '50'. Labels on the scale include 'SYS', 'DIA', and 'PULSE'.

INTRODUCTION

Losing weight requires a simple formula; Think of your weight like a bank account, the more you put in your account, the "bigger" it gets, the more you spend, the "smaller" it gets.

Reduce calories taken in and increase calories spent. This basically means that if you eat fewer calories than you burn, you'll lose weight. Easy right?

For one week in the next month, keep a food diary to improve awareness of what you are eating and whether you're eating out of habit instead of real hunger. **Please write down EVERYTHING you put in your mouth.** You will be amazed as to how much food you are actually consuming. Once you know the types and amounts of foods you are eating, you may be able to improve the quality and reduce the amount without having to count every calorie.

EXAMPLE OF A FOOD DIARY



My Food Diary

Monday	
Breakfast	
Snack	
Lunch	
Snack	
Dinner	
Snack	

Tuesday	
Breakfast	
Snack	
Lunch	
Snack	
Dinner	
Snack	

Wednesday	
Breakfast	
Snack	
Lunch	
Snack	
Dinner	
Snack	

Thursday	
Breakfast	
Snack	
Lunch	
Snack	
Dinner	
Snack	

Friday	
Breakfast	
Snack	
Lunch	
Snack	
Dinner	
Snack	

Saturday	
Breakfast	
Snack	
Lunch	
Snack	
Dinner	
Snack	

LEARN YOUR BODY MASS INDEX (BMI) FROM YOUR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

This is a measure of your weight in relation to your height. It is a good indicator of healthy or unhealthy weight for adults. Calculating your BMI will help you identify how much weight you may need to lose to reduce your risk of heart disease and stroke and live a heart-healthy life.

The key to losing weight/ maintaining healthy weight is setting realistic goals and making little lifestyle changes. Make healthy eating choices and exercise in a way you can sustain for the long term. Healthy living is a gradual process. If you fall off your plan, forgive yourself and get back on track ASAP.

Learn about your situational and emotional triggers that might be pushing you toward unhealthy choices.



HOW TO EAT RIGHT

For us "weight loss" is not the goal; healthy lifestyle and habits are. The weight loss will happen as a by-product. Generally "going on a diet" means "going off it" as it gets tough or unrealistic, especially if it is all these new age severe restricted diets.



**Focus on what you can do,
rather than the things that
are off-limits.
Plan for small changes,
rather than a crash diet
that turns all your
habits upside down.**

SO WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- a. Use smaller plates.
- b. Eat only half of what's served when dining out.
- c. Replacing saturated fats and sugary, high-calorie foods with healthier options
- d. Never skip breakfast. A good breakfast gives you energy to go about your daily activities and your body has all day to burn the calories.
- e. Snacking is also important for maintaining energy levels and avoiding binge eating. Choose healthy snacks, such as fruits, veggies and unsalted nuts and seeds
- f. Avoid ALL FRIED FOODS
- g. Don't go back for a second helping if you are not full. Drink plenty water instead
- h. Avoid "diet drinks". They may be low in sugar, but they contain Aspartame, which may cause health challenges.
- i. Pick a "cheat day".. A day during the week where you are allowed to eat a small portion of your favorite "unhealthy" meal. This gives you something to look forward to and avoids you feeling "deprived".
- j. Don't combine your carbohydrates eg: beans and dodo, beans and rice, plantain and yam.
- k. Avoid SUGAR, instead drink tea with lemon or a teaspoon of honey. No sugar in cereal.

THIS IS HOW YOUR PLATE SHOULD LOOK



The "plate method" of portion control is an easy, visual way of what your plate should look like at every meal.

In addition to understanding what to eat, it is also important to understand portion size. This helps in avoiding high-calorie foods, and avoiding over eating "healthy" foods.



A simple way to remember

Carbohydrates portions should not be bigger than your fist

Vegetable portion should be the size of your 2 open palms

Protein portions should be the size of your palm (minus the fingers)

Fat portion should be the size of your thumb.



www.thesun.co.uk/living/3571305/a-fist-of-pasta-and-a-fingertip-of-butter-how-your-hand-reveals-the-perfect-portion-size-and-how-much-youre-overeating/amp/

**Point
to note**

JUST BECAUSE
SOMETHING IS FAT-FREE OR
REDUCED-CALORIE
DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN
HAVE **UNLIMITED QUANTITIES.**



I. Vegetables and Fruits

Vegetables and fruits are good sources of vitamins and minerals. They are also low in calories and rich in dietary fiber. Vegetables and fruits, like other plants or plant-based foods, contain substances that may help prevent cardiovascular diseases. Eating more fruits and vegetables may help you cut back on higher calorie foods, such as meat, white rice and cassava.

Although fruits and vegetables are healthy, there are different versions of said fruits and vegetables that you should limit.

Fruits and vegetables to choose

Fresh or frozen vegetables and fruits

Vegetable soup cooked with minimal oil (eg, okro soup, efo-riro, afang, edikaikong, peppersoup)

Steamed vegetables

Vegetable stir fry with minimal oil

Fruits and vegetables to limit/avoid

Canned fruit packed in juice or water

Coconut cream

Vegetables with creamy sauces

Fried or breaded vegetables

Canned fruit packed in heavy syrup/ sugar

Frozen fruit with sugar added

Dried fruits

Packet or canned fruit juices

Egusi soup, Banga soup, Ofada stew, Fried, oily stew



2.

Whole Grains/Carbohydrates

Whole grains are good sources of fiber and other nutrients that play a role in regulating blood pressure and heart health. You can raise the amount of whole grains in a heart-healthy diet by making simple substitutions for refined grain products. Or be adventurous and try a new whole grain, such as quinoa or barley.

Beware of bread made with white flour and colored brown with food coloring, masquerading as whole grain bread!!



Whole grain/ Carbohydrate to choose

- Whole-wheat flour, for baking and eating with soup.
- Whole-grain bread, preferably 100% whole wheat bread or 100% whole-grain bread
- High-fibre cereal with 5g or more fibre in a serving eg Weetabix
- Brown rice, garri, basmati rice
- Whole-grain pasta
- Oatmeal (can be made into porridge or "swallow") with fruit slices to sweeten
- Low-fat crackers
- Root vegetables that contain starch (eg yam, irish/sweet potatoes) Plantain

Whole-wheat flour



Whole-grain bread



High-fibre cereal



Garri



Whole-grain pasta



Oatmeal



Low-fat crackers



Yam



Plantain



Whole grain/ Carbohydrate to limit or avoid

- Egg noodles
- Frozen waffles
- Muffins
- Sugar
- Honey (use sparingly)
- White, refined flour
- White bread (agege bread, bread rolls, hotdog bread)
- Biscuits
- Corn bread
- Doughnuts, Pies, Cakes, Pastry
- Pounded yam, mashed potatoes
- Fufu



3.

Fat

Limiting how much saturated and trans fats you eat is a vital step to reduce your blood cholesterol and lower your risk of coronary artery disease.

Saturated fat

No more than 5 to 6% of your total daily intake. You can reduce the amount of saturated fat in your diet by trimming fat off your meat or choosing lean meats with no visible fat. You can also add less butter, palm oil, vegetable oil when cooking. As a rule of thumb, you must not see the oil in your soups and stews.

No more than
5/6%
of your total
daily intake

You may also want to check your food labels. Some of these — even those labelled "reduced fat" — may be made with oils containing trans-fats. One clue that a food has some trans-fat in it is the phrase "**partially hydrogenated**" in the ingredient list.



When you use fats, choose monounsaturated fats, such as olive oil or canola oil. Polyunsaturated fats, found in certain fish, avocados, nuts and seeds, also are good choices for a heart-healthy diet. When used in place of saturated fat, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats may help lower your total blood cholesterol. But moderation is essential, as all types of fat are high in calories.

Olive oil



Canola oil



Vegetable and nut oils



Cholesterol
-lowering margarine, such as
Benecol, Promise Activ or
Smart Balance



Nuts, seeds
(not more than a handful at a
time as a snack)



Avocados

**Fats
to
choose**



**Fats
to
limit**



Lard



Bleached palm oil?
"ofada sauce"



Gravy



Bacon fat



Hydrogenated
margarine
and shortening



Cocoa butter found
in chocolate



Cream sauce



Butter

4.

Protein

Lean meat, poultry and fish, low-fat dairy products, and eggs are some of your best sources of protein. Be careful to choose lower fat options, such as skimmed milk rather than whole milk and skinless roasted chicken rather than fried chicken.

Certain types of fish are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which can lower blood fats called triglycerides. You'll find the highest amounts of omega-3 fatty acids in cold-water fish, such as salmon, mackerel (Titus) and herring. Other sources of omega 3 are flaxseed, walnuts, soybeans and canola oil.

Legumes eg Quinoa are also good sources of protein and contain less fat and no cholesterol, making them good substitutes for meat. Please note Beans contains protein, but also has carbohydrate content, so be careful when combining with other carbohydrates like rice and plantain.



Protein to choose

Skinless poultry



Legumes



Lean ground meats



Eggs (regardless of your cholesterol level)

Low-fat dairy products, such as skimmed or low-fat (1%) milk, yogurt and cheese



Soy beans and soy products.



Fish, especially cold-water fish, such as mackerel, salmon etc

Bacon



Full-fat milk and other dairy



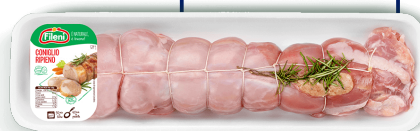
Hot dogs and sausage



Fried or breaded meat



Proteins to limit or avoid



Organ meats, such as kidney, Liver, "Shaki" etc



Fatty and marbled meats ('torzo')



Poultry with skin

Eating a lot of salt can contribute to high blood pressure. The American Heart Association recommends that; Healthy adults have no more than a level teaspoon of salt per day.

Reducing the amount of salt you add to food at the table or while cooking, and avoid canned or processed foods, such as soups, baked goods and frozen dinners.

You can reduce the amount of salt you eat by choosing your condiments carefully. Many condiments are available in reduced-sodium versions, and salt substitutes can add flavour to your food with less sodium.



Always remember to read spice labels and avoid spices that contain sodium in any form.



Low-salt items to choose

- Herbs and salt free spices
- Salt-free seasoning blends
- Reduced-salt versions of condiments, such as reduced-salt soy sauce and reduced-salt ketchup



High salt items to limit or avoid

- Restaurant meals
- Instant noodles (indomie)
- Canned soups
- Table salt
- Condiments; soy sauce, ketchup, mayonnaise
- Tomato juice



We all know that water is very beneficial to the health and this truth has been supported by health authorities all over the world.



Daily recommended water intake is about 2 litres, or half a gallon of water on a daily basis.

Proper hydration is not only good for your brain, your mood, and your body weight, but it's also essential for your heart.

There are obviously a lot of foods that are allowed. Try not to focus on the foods that are not allowed, please.

Sample meal plan

This is just an example of how your meals should look like. It not exhaustive and you can use the guidelines listed above to vary it to your taste.



Days of the week	 Breakfast	 Lunch	 Dinner
Monday	2 slices of toast, 1 boiled egg, tea with a slice of lemon, one orange	Rice, steamed veg, grilled skinless chicken	Fish pepper soup (no yam)
Tuesday	1 slice of yam with stew and a piece of grilled fish, small bowl of watermelon	Eba(check portion) with sea food okro	Chicken salad with a tea spoon of low fat French dressing
Wednesday	One moi-moi and a small bowl of pap (optionally sweetened with honey. A small bowl of paw paw	Spaghetti/pasta with stirfry vegetable, lean beef strips	Beans, and steamed fish, One apple
Thursday	2 weetabix biscuits with skimmed milk and one English pear	Sweet potato/yam porrage with efo riro and fish	Moi-moi, fish and salad
Friday	2 slices of toast, 1 boiled egg, tea with a slice of lemon, one small bowl of pine apple	Boiled/ roasted plantain, edikaikong soup	Quinoa with chicken salad
Saturday	Oat meal porridge, with skimmed milk, steamed fish, one apple	Eba, with vegetable soup, fish	Fish pepper soup (no yam)
Sunday	1 slice of yam with stew and a piece of grilled fish, one orange	Jollof rice, grilled chicken without the skin, green vegetable salad	Beans, steamed fish, one apple

About the Author

My name is **Dr Monisola Adanijo**- your favourite doctor with a heart.

I'm a Cardiologist, Medical Director of Naveen Healthcare, and I am in the business of preventing death from heart (cardiovascular) disease.

I have 22 years experience working as a Doctor, and 12 years as a Consultant Cardiologist to several reputable hospitals. I'm also a wife, a mom, a fitness enthusiast, a speaker, and a philanthropist.



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